

# EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH CORONER'S OFFICE



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To Whom It May Concern:

I am requesting an opinion on an exception to LRS 42:1121.

The East Baton Rouge Parish Coroner's Office (EBRPCO) currently employs 2 full-time Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs.) We also employ 6 contract SANEs that cover shifts on an "as needed" basis. Our SANEs perform forensic medical examinations on patients from birth to death and cover all of Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) Region 2 (7 parishes) and respond to all 7 hospitals in East Baton Rouge Parish.

A SANE is registered nurse who has completed specialized education and clinical preparation in the medical forensic care of the patient who has experienced sexual assault or abuse. SANEs perform the medical forensic examination, gather information for the medical forensic history, collect and document forensic evidence, and document pertinent physical findings from patients. They coordinate with advocates to ensure that patients are referred to appropriate resources. They collaborate with physicians to provide appropriate medical screening and treatment for patients. They coordinate with law enforcement on reported cases to transfer evidence collected during the forensic medical exam, and testify in court when needed. Across the country, SANEs are considered under national standards as the best practice for conducting sexual assault forensic examinations.

To become a SANE, you must first be a registered nurse (or advanced practice), preferably with two years or more experience in areas of practice that require advanced physical assessment skills, such as emergency, critical care and maternal child health. The SANEs must complete a 40 hour classroom training that meets the International Association of Forensic Nurses education guidelines. After the didactic portion is completed there is a 2 day clinical training and extensive preceptorship before the nurses are able to perform exams on their own. Due to the rigorous training requirements along with the difficult nature of the position, it can be challenging to recruit and retain nurses to do this work.

One of our current full-time nurses is an experienced SANE who is very valuable to our program. She also works in an "as needed" capacity as an Emergency Room nurse at a local hospital. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased need for nurses willing to work on the front lines, she would like to leave the full-time position with our office return to her contract position that she previously held allowing her more time in the Emergency Department. The EBRPCO is aware of RS 42:1121 and the restrictions on public servants not able to return as a contractors for 2 years after termination of service. We respectfully request that an exception be granted in this case so that she can continue to serve her community.

Sincerely,

*Mendy Escudier, BSN, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P*

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SANE Program Coordinator

East Baton Rouge Parish Coroner's Office

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